



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

September 17, 2007

Reply to
Attn Of: ETPA-088

Ref: 06-003-BLM

Douglas Linn, EIS Project Lead
Bureau of Land Management
28910 Highway 20 West
Hines, Oregon 97738

Dear Mr. Linn:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the **final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the North Steens Ecosystem Restoration Plan (CEQ No. 20070345)** in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act. Section 309, independent of NEPA, specifically directs EPA to review and comment in writing on the environmental impacts associated with all major federal actions. Under our responsibilities and procedures we evaluate the document's adequacy in meeting NEPA requirements.

EPA expressed environmental concerns with the draft EIS based on clarity of the document and descriptions of alternatives as well as concerns regarding air quality, water quality, source water, riparian vegetation, and coordination with local entities to implement the plan successfully.

We believe that the final EIS addresses the majority of our concerns. We are pleased to see that the final EIS indicates that the BLM will be using the protocol for addressing CWA section 303(d) Listed Waters as the plan is implemented. We appreciate the improvements that BLM made to the document, more clearly describing the alternatives through more thorough discussions of the components and impacts of alternatives, for addressing our concerns with respect to riparian areas, and for including a list of 303(d) listed streams.

We continue to have concerns about air quality, as the final EIS does not show how the planned restoration projects will meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). In addition, we still have concerns regarding coordination with local entities as the plan is implemented. We recommend that these components be carefully considered in the Record of Decision (ROD).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the final EIS. Should you have any questions regarding our comments please feel free to contact Fatima Bukhari at (907) 271-1481 or by electronic mail at bukhari.fatima@epa.gov with any questions that you may have or me at (206) 553-1601.

Sincerely,

/s/

Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
NEPA Review Unit